

PSC APPROVES INDUSTRY PLAN DESIGNED TO FREE UP MORE TELEPHONE NUMBERS IN THE 816 AND 913 AREA CODES

Jefferson City (May 10, 1999)---In an effort to extend the life of the 816 and 913 area codes in the Kansas City metropolitan area, the Missouri Public Service Commission has approved a telecommunications industry plan supported by the Office of the Public Counsel and the Staff of the Missouri Public Service Commission, which will eliminate protected codes for the 816 and 913 area codes. This plan has also received approval from the Kansas Corporation Commission.

As a result, thousands of telephone numbers will be freed up for use in both area codes. In addition, seven-digit dialing will be retained for all local calling within the 816 and within the 913 area codes. Local calling between the 816 and 913 area codes (over state lines) will require 10-digit dialing (the area code plus the number).

According to the telecommunications industry report filed with the Commission, the elimination of protected codes is a necessary step to avoid another area code relief project (introduction of a new area code) in both 816 and 913; however, it is extremely doubtful that additional area codes could be obtained if codes remain protected.

This decision will not affect what is currently a local call or a toll call. A local call today will continue to be a local call under this decision. A toll call today will continue to be a toll call under this decision. **However, if a customer in Overland Park, Kansas (913 area code) places a call to Kansas City, Missouri (816 area code), the caller will be required to dial 10-digits to complete that call (the area code plus the number). It will still be a local call.**

In Missouri, protected codes in the 314 area code and the adjoining 618 area code in Illinois were eliminated in 1993. Customers now dial 10-digits for local calls across state lines.

According to a telecommunications industry report submitted to the Missouri Public Service Commission, protected codes restrict the available NXX codes (the first three numbers of your seven

(More)

digit telephone number) for assignment in each area code's local calling scope since the same NXX's are not issued in the same calling scope of the area codes (As an example, a 635 NXX or prefix assigned in the Missouri 816 area code of the Kansas City metropolitan area cannot be assigned in the 913 area code of the Kansas side of the KC metropolitan area under the protected code, seven digit dialing status. Eliminating the protected code status would allow for assignment of that 635 prefix in both area codes, freeing up thousands of numbers).

On January 5, 1999, the telecommunications industry area code administrator declared a jeopardy for the 816 and 913 area codes so that an allocation plan could be developed to ensure that all NXX's within an area code are not assigned before the supply of NXX's can be replenished. According to the industry report, to replenish the supply of NXX's on both the 816 and 913 area codes, all protected codes must be eliminated.

The Telecommunications Industry report recommends all protected codes in the 816 and 913 area codes be eliminated as soon as practical, but no later than **December 4, 1999**. The report calls for permissive dialing to begin **June 5, 1999**. In the near future, a customer education plan will be developed and carried out which will focus on the requirement to dial 10-digits when placing local calls that cross the area code boundaries (state lines).

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